

ART. XXXVIII.—*On Cancer, its Allies and other Tumours, with Special Reference to their Medical and Surgical Treatment.* By F. ALBERT PURCELL, M.D., M.R.C.S., Surgeon to the Cancer Hospital, Brompton, etc. 8vo., pp. 311.

THIS monograph discusses general topics relating to malignant growths, such as the definition of cancer, its anatomical aspect, infiltration and infection of adjacent and distant parts, methods of microscopic examination, and the classification of malignant neoplasms; and then considers in successive chapters carcinomas and sarcomas of the various organs. Occasionally other tumours, such as adenoma of the breast, are discussed, which are not looked upon as malignant, but which possess a clinical importance because of the necessity of their differentiation from cancerous affections.

In the Introduction the author speaks of the remedies that have been advanced for the treatment of cancer, and shows by examples the tedious and painful character of the caustic treatment. After a long and careful trial he believes that Chloroform is utterly valueless for the arrest or cure of cancer. This conclusion he reached from experiments made with the drug obtained from the very stock from which Clay received his supply. The best treatment in his opinion is operation, which he performs with antiseptic methods, according to Lister's teachings. There is added a long extract, of a half dozen pages, from Lister's paper on the Preparation of Cat-gut Ligatures. As cure by atrophy occasionally happens, he expresses the hope that at some future time a remedy may be found which will effect a cure of these malignant diseases. This is to be looked for in a constitutional remedy.

The author has the usual difficulty of defining cancer, and sometimes seems to use the word as synonymous with malignant, while again he appears to restrict it to carcinoma. He says, "Let us limit the term 'cancer' to those forms of disease which are specialized carcinoma (clinically including sarcoma and epithelioma)." His verbatim answer to, What is meant by cancer? is as follows: "It is a malignant growth, consisting of a delicate fibroid stroma, within its meshes, aggregate but not coherent cell-elements—cells, nuclei, or granules generally uniform, though often similar to natural cell-elements." It astonishes the reviewer that authors continue efforts to define a word which should have no existence in the scientific language of to-day. Cancer was employed in the ante-pathological era to signify a growth, of which nothing was known except that it was malignant. As soon as investigation showed that growths of different structure presented this characteristic the word lost its value, and now has no better claim to existence in scientific surgery, than "hives" has in dermatology or "amaurosis" in ophthalmology.

The author's views of the origin of cancer appear to consist in a belief that there is a constitutional predisposition of the tissue, but no constitutional blood-poison. He seems not to favour the theory of local origin; and does not refer to Cohnheim's hypothesis of unused embryonic cells. This criticism of his views is intentionally cautious, because the author does not express his opinions very dogmatically, but rather indulges in interrogatives.

Cancer is regarded as a disease of degenerated tissues; hence it is found very frequently in the breast and uterus, since these organs undergo functional degeneration at a comparatively early period of life.

Mr. Purcell classifies the malignant tumours as follows: A. *Carcinoma*; including, 1, scirrroid; 2, hæmatoid; 3, melanoid; 4, colloid; 5, myxomatoid. B. *Sarcoma*; including, 1, spindle-celled; 2, round-celled; 3, giant-celled; 4, mixed-celled; 5, small round-celled (glioma). C. *Lymphadenoma*; D. *Epithelioma*; E. *Psamomma*.

That which may be called the second portion of the book, beginning at page 98, describes the malignant tumours as they affect the different external and internal organs. In this part of the treatise the author shows an equal familiarity with the microscopical and clinical aspects of morbid growths; and has, therefore, produced a series of chapters which are exceedingly interesting, and of great practical value. If space permitted, long extracts could be made which would convince the reader of this masterly combination of pathological science and clinical medicine and surgery; which is the more appreciated because so unusual in the literature of the present decade. The first part of the book deals apparently with questions too philosophical for the tastes of the author, and is, therefore, written badly; but the second portion is evidently the work of a practical observer, who has had abundant microscopical and clinical experience.

The remarks on treatment cannot fail to furnish suggestions to those who refer to the treatise for information regarding cases met with in daily practice.

The wood-cuts are rather poor, and the style of diction sometimes obscure (see top of page 152); but in the second portion of the volume there is so much of value that the reader forgets his uninteresting plodding through the early chapters, which will, perhaps, be improved in subsequent editions.

J. B. R.

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ART. XXXIX.—*Ministro d'Agricoltura, Industria e Commercio. Direzione di Statistica, Annali di Statistica, Serie 2nd, vol. 6, 1881. Geografia Nosologica Dell' Italia.* Studio del dottore GIUSEPPE SORMANI, Professor d'Igiene nella Regia Università di Pavia.

*Administration of Agriculture, Industry, and Commerce. Direction of Statistics, Statistical Annals, Nosological Geography of Italy,* prepared by Dr. GIUSEPPE SORMANI, Professor of Hygiene in the Royal University of Pavia. 8vo. pp. 335. Rome, Eredi Botta, 1881.

DR. SORMANI having been very favourably impressed with the value and importance of the statistical atlas of the United States compiled from the census of 1870 by Francis A. Walker, conceived the idea of doing a similar work for his own country, and prepared from the census of Italy the volume under examination, for which he received from the Royal Lombardic Institute of Science and Letters a prize of 1500 lira, and a silver medal. The original paper was illustrated by an atlas of 80 plates; the volume here noticed contains seven. These all relate to the military service of the country, and exhibit at a glance, by the lightness or density of colour in the different provinces, the relative proportions of those disabled by reason of the following conditions or diseases. 1. Scald-head, most abundant in Southern Italy, maximum 30 or 40 to 1000. 2. Caries of the teeth, most abundant on the northern coast line, 8 to 13 per 1000.